

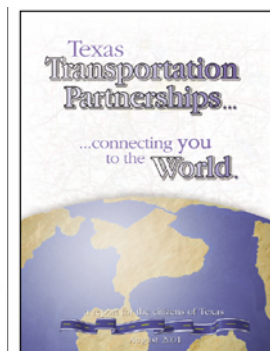
OVERVIEW

Planning for the Future

In August 2001, Texas Transportation Commission Chairman, John W. Johnson, published a report to Governor Rick Perry, the members of the Texas Legislature and all Texans, entitled "[Texas Transportation Partnerships](#)". That report established five goals to assist the department in building a new vision for Texas transportation and its infrastructure.

These goals were to provide:

- **Reliable mobility**
- **Improved safety**
- **Responsible systems preservation**
- **Streamlined project delivery**
- **Economic vitality**



Upon these goals, the [2003 – 2007 Strategic Plan](#) was developed. In an effort to streamline agency processes and make them easily understood by the public, simplified budget strategies, including outputs and efficiency measures, were proposed to the Legislative Budget Board.

These strategies include:

- **Plan It** 
- **Build It** 
- **Maintain It** 
- **Use It** 
- **Manage It** 

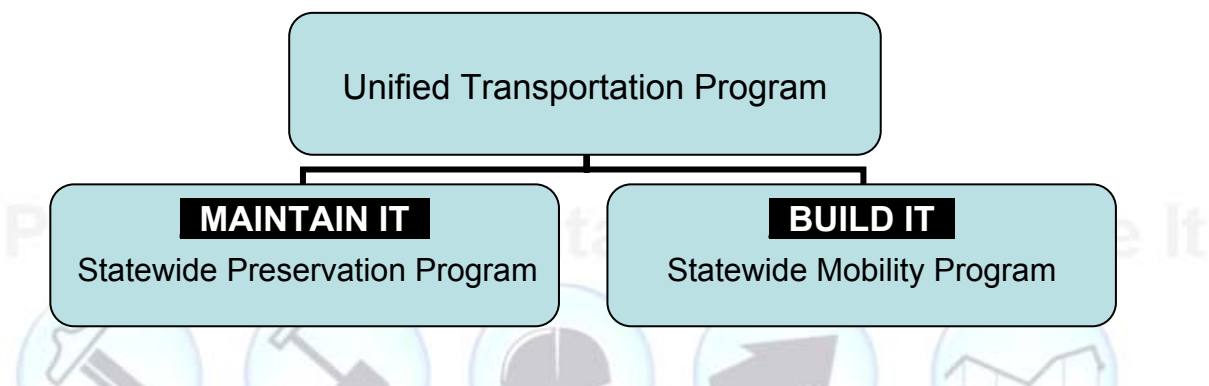
The highway programs should provide the structure to achieve many of the goals and output measures brought forward in the Texas Transportation Partnerships and the Strategic Plan.

What is the Unified Transportation Program (UTP)?

The Texas Transportation Commission ([commission](#)) and the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) use the Unified Transportation Program (UTP) as TxDOT's ten-year plan to guide transportation project development and construction.

To align with the budget strategies outlined in the [2003 – 2007 Strategic Plan](#), the department approves the UTP in two volumes:

- The Statewide Preservation Program (SPP)
- The Statewide Mobility Program (SMP)



Why is the Unified Transportation Program (UTP) published?

Federal transportation legislation, such as the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century ([TEA-21](#)), and its predecessor, the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) of 1991, specified the transportation systems on which certain federal funds can be used and defines the role of the Metropolitan Planning Organizations ([MPO](#)) in the planning and development of projects. This Federal transportation legislation required each designated Metropolitan Planning Organization to develop a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and the state to compile a Statewide Transportation Improvement Program ([STIP](#)) as a condition of securing federal funds for transportation projects. The projects listed in the STIP, when approved by the Federal Highway Administration ([FHWA](#)) and the [Federal Transit Administration](#), are the only transportation projects that can utilize federal funds. (Though TEA-21 expired in October 2003 and its programs are being carried forward through continuing resolutions, the department anticipates the new transportation legislation to include the requirement of a STIP.)

Therefore, the UTP, a ten-year financial plan, and the STIP, a three-year financial plan, are used as the backbone for project development on Texas' intermodal transportation network. The UTP is the commission's mechanism to authorize project development.

MAINTAIN IT

Statewide Preservation Program (SPP)

This document encompasses funding strategies to maintain the existing transportation system and is part of the **Maintain It** budget strategy.

It contains information on two highway construction programs:

- Category 1- Preventive Maintenance and Rehabilitation
- Category 6- Structures Replacement and Rehabilitation

It also contains information on two highway maintenance-funding strategies and waterway and railroad preservation projects:

- Routine Maintenance
- Contracted Routine Maintenance
- Waterway and Rail Preservation projects

These programs and projects represent preservation efforts to maintain the existing transportation system and protect existing taxpayer investments.

BUILD IT

Statewide Mobility Program (SMP)

This document will contain information regarding the **Build It** budget strategy and contains the following highway construction categories:

- Category 2 – Metropolitan Area (TMA) Corridor Projects
- Category 3 – Urban Area (Non-TMA) Corridor Projects
- Category 4 – Statewide Connectivity Corridor Projects
- Category 5 – Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement
- Category 7 – Metropolitan Mobility and Rehabilitation
- Category 8 – Safety
- Category 9 – Transportation Enhancements
- Category 10 – Supplemental Transportation Projects
- Category 11 – District Discretionary
- Category 12 – Strategic Priority

The SMP also contains information regarding the [Aviation](#) Capital Improvement Program and [Public Transportation](#) Programs.

What are the contents of the SPP and SMP?

The SPP and SMP contain:

- an Executive Summary;
- this introduction;
- a listing of requirements for the use of the transportation funds along with the commission's policies;
- a summary of highway construction allocation program amounts;
- listings of project-specific highway construction projects the commission has approved for construction or development;
- highway maintenance funding distributions (SPP)
- waterway and rail preservation projects (SPP)
- Public Transportation Programs (SMP)
- and the Aviation Capital Improvement Program (SMP).

What is the difference in project-specific and allocation programs?

Allocation Programs- The allocation program is a fund management tool. The commission has delegated the responsibility for selecting projects and funds management to the lowest possible levels (the [TxDOT districts and divisions](#)). TxDOT manages most highway construction programs through allocations. Projects can be selected for development, developed and let to contract with each project's cost debited to the allocated funds available for that program. Most allocation programs consist of projects requiring relatively short development times and are intended to preserve the existing highway system. The allocation program process of developing projects allows TxDOT (both the districts and divisions) the flexibility to respond to modifications requested by the MPO and others without going back to the commission for every project change or cancellation, as long as the total allocation for that program is not exceeded.

Project-Specific Programs- the projects in these programs are listed in the UTP. The highway construction programs managed by TxDOT as project specific are major projects to improve mobility or safety. These major projects are usually associated with longer development periods; higher constructions cost and compete statewide for funds.

What does the Level of Authority mean?

Programming and Funding- An important factor in the project development and selection process is the amount of funds available to construct projects. In order for TxDOT's project development process to maintain its efficiency, projects must be selected years in advance of their actual funding and construction. A project must

pass through many development steps including: researching proposed routes; studying environmental impacts; performing engineering surveys; holding public hearings; signing agreements with the counties or cities (if needed to fulfill state or federal requirements); acquiring right-of-way; producing construction plans; and awarding construction contracts.

The actions listed above, and countless others, must occur in sequence to bring a project from an idea, to a reality. Therefore, a project must be programmed years in advance of the actual construction, to ensure that all development steps are completed at the appropriate time.

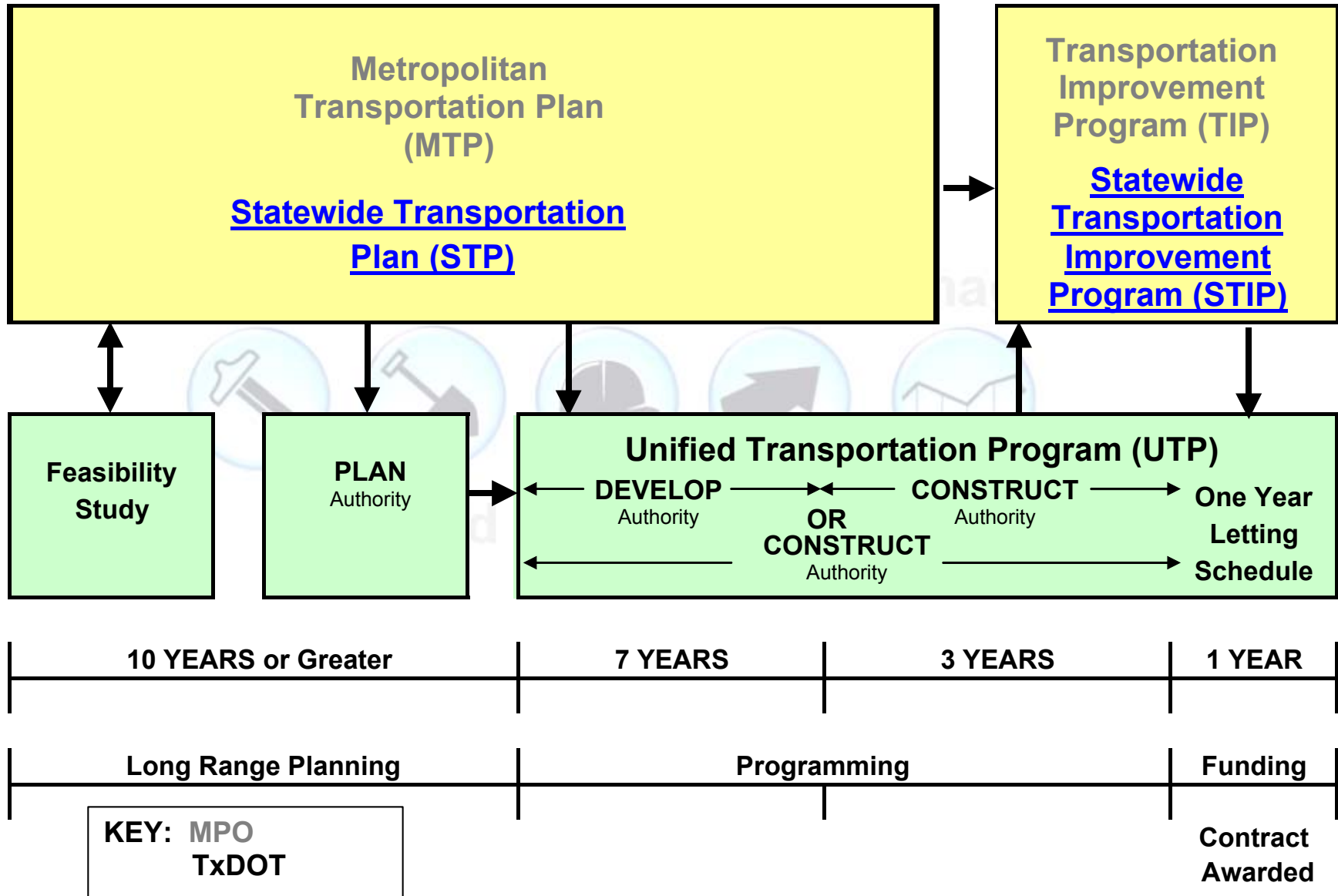
The steps required in project development have been organized into three levels of development authority listed below. The commission uses these levels of authority to authorize district resource expenditures to complete the development actions included in each level. A chart depicting the levels of authority, including approximate times allowed for each level, is located on [page VI](#) of this section.

PLAN (formerly Long Range Project)- Projects with this level of authority are in the initial stages of development. This development authority is reserved for mobility or other high capital cost projects where the route studies, environmental impact studies, and right of way determination can take a substantial amount of time. PLAN status authorizes the TxDOT districts to complete the necessary right of way determination including drafting the right of way map, studying routes, performing environmental impact studies, and holding public hearings. Projects with PLAN status are not listed in the UTP because their construction is planned beyond the ten years contained in the UTP.

DEVELOP (formerly Priority 2)- This level of authority authorizes the TxDOT districts to prepare the construction plans and acquire the necessary right of way. Districts should substantially complete project construction plans (geometric, structural, hydraulic and pavement design) and required right-of-way acquisition prior to moving to CONSTRUCT authority. The amount of projects in DEVELOP is constrained to **seven** years of anticipated future funding.

CONSTRUCT (formerly Priority 1)- This status authorizes the TxDOT district to complete the construction plans, perform the utility adjustments, and award a construction contract for the project in the scheduled Fiscal Year.

THE PROJECT DEVELOPMENT & PLANNING PROCESS



Click the link below to view the

[SUMMARY OF CATEGORIES](#)



for the

STATEWIDE PRESERVATION PROGRAM ([SPP](#))

MAINTAIN IT



and the

STATEWIDE MOBILITY PROGRAM ([SMP](#))

BUILD IT



Plan It

Maintain It

Manage It



Build It

Use It